

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SES-02 SY-05 MCT-02 HA-05
AID-05 OC-06 CCO-00 EB-08 COME-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 PC-01 OMB-01
ACDA-12 CA-01 /111 W
-----097566 152126Z/46

R 151225Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9842
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
RUEHCR /USINT BAGHDAD 544
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PINS, IR
SUBJ: LOW LEVEL VIOLENCE CONTINUES THROUGHOUT IRAN

REF: A. TEHRAN 6716, B. TEHRAN 6718

SUMMARY: ISFAHAN TENSE WITH ENFORCED CALM. SPORADIC VIOLENCE
CONTINUES IN OTHER AREAS OF IRAN, SUCH AS AHWAZ AND TABRIZ.
MINOR PROBLEM IN TEHRAN. GOVERNMENT DENIES SPREAD
OF MARTIAL LAW. END SUMMARY.

1. CONSULATE ISFAHAN REPORTS THAT TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES,
ORDERED OFF STREETS BY MILITARY GOVERNOR LTG NAJI, HAVE BEEN
REPLACED BY REGULAR ARMED TRUCKS. ACCORDING TO CONSUL
MCGAFFEY, EVENING OF AUG 13 BANK AND THEATRE WERE BOMBED
AND NIGHT OF AUG 14 A BANK WAS BURNED IN AREAS SUPPOSEDLY
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UNDER CONTROL OF MARTIAL LAW. IN SEPARATE INCIDENT
AUG 13 MILITARY FIRED ON A CROWD AFTER THREE WARNINGS
WHICH WERE IGNORED, RESULTING IN ONE KILLED AND A NUMBER
OF ARRESTS. MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT
THOSE ARRESTED FOR VIOLATING CURFEW AND ATTEMPTING PRO-
VOCATIVE ACTS WILL FACE MILITARY TRIALS. CONSULATE
ISFAHAN REPORTS FURTHER THAT NIGHT OF AUG 14 TWO APARTMENT

BUILDINGS IN ISFAHAN WERE ATTACKED SIMULTANEOUSLY BY SMALL GROUPS OF UNKNOWN DEMONSTRATORS USING ROCKS AND BRICKS CAUSING WINDOW DAMAGE BUT NO INJURIES. BOTH APARTMENTS CONTAIN ITALIAN NATIONALS EMPLOYED WITH SIESICOM, A SUBCONTRACTOR OF MERZ QUANTA, A BRITISH FIRM. CONSULATE BELIEVES TWO BUILDINGS WERE SPECIFICALLY SINGLED OUT AND NOTES A CHANGE IN PATTERN IS OCCURRING WITH RESPECT TO INCIDENTS IN ISFAHAN AREA. IN CONTRAST TO EARLIER INCIDENTS INVOLVING LARGE GROUPS HITTING GENERAL TARGETS SUCH AS RESTAURANTS, BANKS OWNED BY BAHAI'S AND CINEMAS, THE MOST RECENT INCIDENTS RESULT FROM SMALL, WELL ORGANIZED GROUPS ATTACKING SELECTED TARGETS SUCH AS BANK MELLI, AND INSTALLATIONS WITH ARMY OR FOREIGN CONNECTIONS.

2. TABRIZ EXPERIENCED DEMONSTRATIONS AUG 14 WHICH INCLUDED, ACCORDING TO UNCONFIRMED REPORTS, FIRE BOMBING OF ARYA CINEMA. CONSULATE HAS CONFIRMED REPORT OF AUG 13 BURNING OF ONE OF TABRIZ'S LARGE WESTERN STYLE RESTAURANTS WHICH RESULTED IN NO INJURIES. VICE CONSUL METRINKO HAS RECEIVED UNCONFIRMED REPORT OF RIOTING AUG 14 IN CITY OF S4-?, 150 KMS. NORTHEAST OF TABRIZ. IN TABRIZ, CONFRONTATION BETWEEN STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATION REMAINS UNRESOLVED AT AZARABADEGAN UNIVERSITY WITH SECURITY GUARDS TAKING CONTROL OF CAMPUS AUG 14. TWO WEEKS AGO, IN CONCILIATORY GESTURE TO STUDENTS, NEW CHANCELLOR MAJID MOLAVI HAD REMOVED GUARDS FROM CAMPUS. AZARABADEGAN

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HAS NOW CANCELLED FINAL TERM OF CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR (WHICH HAD BEEN SEVERELY INTERRUPTED BY EARLIER DEMONSTRATIONS) FOLLOWING STUDENTS REFUSAL TO RETURN TO CLASSES UNLESS A NUMBER OF THEIR DEMANDS, IN ADDITION TO REMOVAL OF GUARDS, WERE MET.

3. IN TEHRAN, AFTERNOON OF AUG 15, POLICE WERE ON HAND AS INDIVIDUALS EXITED FROM TWO MOSQUES IN DOWNTOWN AREAS TO DISPERSE EMERGING CROWDS. THOSE WHO TRIED TO STICK AROUND WERE SCATTERED. NUMBER OF RUMORS BEGINNING TO CIRCULATE AMONG BOTH FOREIGN AND IRANIAN CITIZENS IN TEHRAN ABOUT ALLEGED SHOOTINGS OR DISTURBANCES. TWO HAVE PROVED TOTALLY FALSE AND WE SUSPECT RUMOR PURVEYORS ARE ON THE MARCH AGAIN.

4. DEMONSTRATION IN AHWAZ LAST WEEKEND LED TO 19 ARRESTS AND INTERNAL BANISHMENT OF "PREACHER" REZA GOLSORKHI WHO WAS CHARGED WITH INCITING A RIOT. SHIRAZ CONSUL TOMSETH RECEIVED A CALL FROM U.S. PERSONNEL MANAGER OF PARSONS CO. IN AHWAZ REPORTING SPORADIC, LOW LEVEL VIOLENCE IN THAT CITY AUG 15 WITH ALL STORES AND BANKS CLOSE. SITUATION HAS PERSISTED TO POINT WHERE LOCAL INHABITANTS HAVING

DIFFICULTY OBTAINING FOOD SUPPLIES.

5. GOI SPOKESMAN HOMAYOUN, FOLLOWING CABINET MEETING AUG 14, DENIED PRESS REPORTS OF MARTIAL LAW IN AREAS OUTSIDE OF ISFAHAN, SUCH AS SHAHREZA. THE AREA OF HOMAYOUSHahr IS PART OF GREATER ISFAHAN AND THUS AUTOMATICALLY COMES UNDER ORIGINAL MARTIAL LAW DECLARATION, HOMAYOUN SAID. ALTHOUGH LTG NAJI HAS REQUESTED MILITARY JURISDICTION OVER TOWN OF NAJAFABAD THE REQUEST APPARENTLY IS STILL BEING CONSIDERED BY PROVINCIAL SECURITY COUNCIL. IF COUNCIL APPROVES REQUEST IT WILL BE FORWARDED TO CABINET FOR FINAL DECISION. HE ADDED THAT SITUATION IN SHIRAZ DID NOT WARRANT IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW. HOMAYOUN REFERRED TO FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS RITES BUT

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REQUESTED CLERGY AND CONGREGATIONS NOT TO ALLOW "A HANDFULL OF MASKED AGITATORS" TO PUT RELIGION TO TREASONOUS ABUSES.

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